

TEACHING THE CHILD TO READ



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Teaching THE CHILD TO READ

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FOREWORD



There are doubtless more reports of research on the teaching of reading than on the teaching of any other subject. A number of good chronological and systematic reports of these investigations are available but most of them fail to make explicit a practical program of teaching which embodies the results of the multitude of experiments. There are available a large number of practical treatises on teaching reading in which the findings of research are more or less fully and validly taken into account. The practical procedures recommended, however, take a variety of forms when reduced to actual classroom procedures and materials. If a teacher attempts to arrange a program which embodies the recommendations of several such books of these two types, she will encounter a formidable task. She is likely to be greatly puzzled by the fact that one treatise, for example, recommends definite instruction in nearly sixty different types of comprehension whereas another outlines only five or six. When as much emphasis is placed upon teaching reading successfully, as is the case at the present time, teachers occasionally become bewildered by the number and variety of recommendations which they encounter. There is, therefore, a great need for a volume which outlines in simple and precise fashion a workable program based on full understanding of the results of research on the one hand and of the requirements of a typical classroom on the other. The present volume will serve this purpose admirably.


This book is easy reading. The technicalities of research, testing, and diagnosis are either omitted or rendered into intelligible prose. It is definite. The authors outline their recom-

mentations in the concrete terms of classroom procedures. The program recommended is practical and relatively simple. The authors have outlined the indispensable teaching methods without undue elaboration or detail of procedure. The program is comprehensive. Every important phase from informal preparatory or background activities to testing achievement and diagnosing unusual cases is included. It is, in brief, an outline of a program of teaching reading which teachers can actually put into operation and which they can follow with assurance that their teaching will be effective and up-to-date.

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PREFACE



Teaching the Child to Read is written to help the teacher-in-training and the teacher-in-service develop a sound understanding of the teaching of reading so that better teaching may result. Findings of research in reading, in child development, and in the psychology of learning as related to reading are herein interpreted and summarized into instructional practice.

The primary emphasis through this presentation is on the needs of the individual child in terms of his developmental growth in reading ability. Consequently, the individual nature of reading instruction is more extensively treated in this edition than was true in the previous one. By adjusting instruction to the varying rates of growth in reading development and by using well-organized, diversified methods of instruction, it is hoped that serious reading difficulties may be avoided. As a result, each child, unhampered by inefficiency in using the printed page as an aid to learning and as a means of personal development, will profit more fully from his instruction in the modern elementary school than he has been able to do in the past.

The major difference between this edition and the previous one lies in increased emphases rather than in a change in the point of view. In the first place, a greater emphasis on the developmental nature of reading is maintained throughout the book. Basic to the discussion is the assumption that growth in reading is the ability to meet the similar but more mature reading demands of more advanced materials, coupled with the ability to differentiate the reading process to meet the increasing specificity of the materials from various fields of human experience.

In the second place, the reading program is considered to be a series of reading experiences that encourages the growth of reading proficiencies in a truly orderly, meaningful, and developmental manner. The sequence of learning, therefore, receives more attention than in the previous edition.

In the third place, the cornerstone upon which this revision is founded is the fact that one child may grow more slowly in reading ability than another and yet both may be developing reading proficiency soundly. In recent years there has developed a keener appreciation of the fact that varying rates of growth are not only to be expected but to be encouraged. As a result, the grade-level concept has been discarded in favor of the reading-maturity level. It is maintained that instructional materials should be selected with the point of view that the child should work at the reading-maturity level at which he can work comfortably, rather than that he should necessarily use the materials of his grade placement.

Finally, those sections which have been retained have been rewritten and expanded, wherever necessary, to give teachers more specific help in class organization and instructional practice.

The authors wish to express their deep indebtedness to the many research workers who have made reading one of the most carefully studied human activities. Upon the findings of these workers the authors have found it necessary to lean very heavily. The authors wish also to express their indebtedness to their associates in education—their teachers, their co-workers, their students—from whom they have gained insight, enthusiasm, and encouragement. The authors are likewise indebted to Dr. E. A. Bond and to Fredricka Hoffa Bond for expert assistance in editing the manuscript.

Guy L. Bond
Eva Bond Wagner

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PART I



**THE TEACHER CONSIDERS
THE READING PROBLEM**

